

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A foam component comprising a mixture of a polymeric material and an active ingredient, preferably being active in aqueous environment, the foam component being stable upon contact with air and unstable upon contact with water.
2. A foam component according to claim 1 which release the active ingredient or part thereof upon contact with water, the component preferably partially or completely disintegrating, dispersing, denaturing and/ or dissolving upon contact with water.
3. A flexible foam component according to any preceding claim which has an elastic modulus of less than 10 GN.m^{-2} , preferably less than 1 GN.m^{-2} .
4. A foam component according to any of claim 1 to 3 obtainable by a process comprising the step of
 - a) obtaining a polymeric material;
 - b) chemically or physically introducing gas in said polymeric material;
 - c) prior to step b) and/or simultaneously with step b) and/ or subsequently to step b), addition of the active ingredient to the polymer material;
 - d) optionally addition in one or more of steps a), b) and c) of a further ingredient, preferably including a plasticiser and/or water;
 - e) and optionally, one or more of steps a) to d) being followed by removal of water.
5. A flexible foam component according to claim 1, 2 or 3 comprising a matrix formed from the polymeric material or partially formed from the polymeric material, containing cells, the component being obtainable by a process comprising the steps of
 - a) formation of a mixture of the polymeric material, the active material and a liquid, preferably water;
 - b) evaporation of the liquid or part thereof to form spacings in the matrix which form the inner area of the cells of the matrix, step b) preferably conducted by

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AMENDED CLAIMS

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new claims 6-11 added: remaining claims unchanged (1 page)]

submitting the mixture of a) to pressure, preferably conducted under increasing of the temperature, and subsequently reducing the pressure, thereby causing the liquid or part thereof to evaporate; and/or step b) preferably conducted by heating the mixture thereby causing the liquid or part thereof to evaporate.

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6. A foam component according to any preceding claim whereby the polymeric material comprises a water-soluble polymer and/ or water-dispersible polymer.

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7. A foam component according to any preceding claim which has a relative density of 0.05 to 0.9.

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8. A foam component according to any preceding claim whereby the active ingredient is a cleaning product ingredient, fabric care ingredient, pharmaceutical ingredient, cosmetic ingredient, personal care ingredient.

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9. A foam component according to claim 7 whereby the active ingredient is selected from moisture sensitive ingredients and/ or liquid ingredients, preferably selected from enzymes, perfumes, surfactants, brighteners, bleaches, bleach activators, fabric softeners, fabric conditioners, antibacterial agents, effervescing systems and mixtures thereof.

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10. A foam component according to any preceding claim whereby the active ingredient comprises an acidic compound, and/ or the polymeric material comprises an acidic polymer and/ or an additional acidic agent is present in the foam component.

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11. A foam component according to any preceding claim whereby the polymeric material comprises a water-soluble polymer selected from polyvinylalcohol, polysaccharides, polycarboxylic acids, cellulose, modified cellulose, gums, and derivatives of said polymers, and mixtures of said polymers.

12. A foam component according to any preceding claim comprising a plasticiser, preferably selected from glycerol, ethylene glycol, diethyleneglycol, propylene glycol, sorbitol.
- 5 13. A foam component according to any preceding claim in the form of a particle having a mean particle size of from 50 to 4000 microns, preferably from 100 to 1500 microns.
- 10 14. A foam component according any of claims 1 to 11 in the form of a sheet, preferably having a mean thickness of from 0.05 microns to 10 centimeters, preferably 0.1 microns to 5 centimeters.
- 15 15. A foam component according to any of claims 1 to 11 in the form of a three-dimensional shape such as a sphere, cube, cylinder.
16. A cleaning composition, fabric care composition, cosmetic composition, personal care composition or pharmaceutical composition comprising a foam component according to any of claims 1 to 14.
- 20 17. A detergent composition, cosmetic composition, personal care composition or pharmaceutical composition comprising the foam component according to any of claims 1 to 14 in the form of an encapsulate, the foam preferably being in the form of sheet according to claim 14.
- 25 18. An absorbent article comprising a foam component of any of claims 1 to 14.
19. A process for making foam component according to any of claims 1 to 3, or 6 to 14 comprising the steps of
- 30 a) obtaining a polymeric material;
- b) chemically or physically introducing gas in said polymeric material;

- c) prior to step b) and/or simultaneously with step b) and/ or subsequently to step b), addition of the active ingredient to the polymer material;
- d) optionally addition in one or more of steps a), b) or c) of a further ingredient, preferably including a plasticiser and/or water; and optionally, one or more of steps a) to d) being followed by removal of water.

20. A process for making a flexible foam component according to any of claims 1 to 3 or 6 to 14 comprising the step of

- a) formation of a mixture of the polymeric material, the active material and a liquid, preferably water;

b) evaporation of the liquid or part thereof to form spacings in the matrix which form the inner area of the cells of the matrix, step b) preferably conducted by submitting the mixture of a) to pressure, preferably conducted under increasing of the temperature, and subsequently reducing the pressure, thereby causing the liquid or part thereof to evaporate; and/or step b) preferably conducted by heating the mixture thereby causing the liquid or part thereof to evaporate.

21. Use of a foam component according to any of claims 1 to 14 to deliver active ingredients to an aqueous environment, preferably the active ingredients being detergent active ingredients and the aqueous environment being the wash water.

22. Use of a foam component according to any of claims 1 to 14 to incorporate active ingredients, preferably enzymes, perfumes, surfactants, brighteners, bleaches, bleach activators, fabric softeners, fabric conditioners, antibacterial agents, effervescing systems, and mixtures thereof, in cleaning compositions, fabric care compositions, personal care compositions, cosmetic compositions or pharmaceutical compositions.

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